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President: Mr. Freitas do Amaral . . . . . (Portugal)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 29

Commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

Special Commemorative Meeting of the General Assembly on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations

The President: I have the honour this morning to open the Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/215 B of 26 May 1994 and 49/12 B of 24 May 1995.

Distinguished Heads of State, Heads of Government and other High Dignitaries of State, Excellencies:

It is my privilege to thank each one of you for coming from all parts of the world to the Headquarters of the United Nations in order to participate in the Special Commemorative Meeting of its fiftieth anniversary and, by doing so, to give public testimony of your praise for the achievements of the last 50 years and of your strong commitment to preserve and reform this commendable Organization.

This is your home, and the future of the United Nations will be what you, Excellencies, decide it to be. The destiny of the United Nations is in your hands.

But what is to be done? Is this an Organization worth preserving in view of its past? And what shall we do with it in view of its future?

(spoke in French)

During the first 50 years of its history, the United Nations has not been able to achieve all of its ideals but it has not been the sterile, ineffective, not-to-say harmful, instrument which its detractors accuse it of being. We humbly acknowledge the mistakes, omissions and faults, but let us not forget the successes, the victories, the good that has been done for the benefit of all mankind.

Should we regret having founded a universal Organization to attempt to maintain peace among nations and to affirm the primacy of law and justice? Do we consider it a mistake to have adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to ensure that these rights are respected by all and to contribute to the democratization of an increasing number of countries?

Do we deny the principle of self-determination of peoples, decolonization, the end of apartheid?

Do we not recognize that development aid to the poorest countries on the planet is essential?

Do we admit to being wrong when we set the most recent priority to protect nature and the environment?

(spoke in Spanish)

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Excellencies, no. We have not been wrong — neither in 1945 nor during the last 50 years. Our principles, our values, our ideals were then and are now politically valid, morally worthy and humanely just. We should be proud of them.

Does this mean that everything is perfect at the United Nations? Obviously not.

But let us not be misled by criticism. There is, of course, reason to rectify many things, but it would be a serious mistake for mankind to allow the United Nations to die.

If the goals and purposes of the United Nations are positive and welcome, and if the Organization has been and continues to be able to realize them even though with limitations and shortcomings, we should not be ashamed of our support to the United Nations. We must simply reform it.

(spoke in English)

Supporting the United Nations — that should be our collective pledge in this Special Commemorative Meeting. Reforming the United Nations — that should be our political commitment during these three days.

We must not allow this Organization to die at the hands of its critics, nor to perish for lack of commitment of its supporters. Therefore I ask you: Please tell the world that freedom, justice, development and human solidarity are magnificent values worth living and working for. Please tell your peoples that we must all help each other for the survival and benefit of humanity. Please tell your Governments and Parliaments that, with the necessary reforms and changes, the United Nations needs money to function, support from Member countries to function well, and wisdom and generosity from us all to save and help those human beings most in need.

Excellencies, at the very beginning of these unique and historic meetings, may I share with you these three wishes:

Let us praise the United Nations and its "founding fathers".

Let us fight the destructive critics of the Organization and not allow them to be the United Nations "liquidating fathers".

Let us take upon ourselves the noble and necessary task of becoming, from today, the "reforming fathers" of the United Nations.

If we do so, we will deserve the respect of future generations, especially when they celebrate — surely in this same Hall — the hundredth anniversary of the United Nations.

I now call upon the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General (*interpretation from Arabic*): May I welcome you all, Kings, heads of State and Government of the world. Welcome to your home, the home of the world's peoples. Welcome to the forum of the United Nations, the forum of peace, concord and development. Welcome to you all, and heartfelt greetings for your leadership.

(spoke in English)

We meet to commemorate 50 years of the United Nations. How can we shape the next 50 years to serve people's needs? The world of the twenty-first century will confront two great opposing forces: globalization and fragmentation. A new dialectic has already begun.

Globalization will generate a number of problems. Financial flows of vast magnitude sweep across the world. Alarming environmental events will expose the planet to permanent damage. Transnational crime will grow. The global communications revolution will generate pressures which our national institutions were not designed to address.

Fragmentation also will characterize the future. The remote and impersonal forces of globalization will cause people to seek security in smaller groups. Fragmentation can breed fanaticism, isolationism, separatism and the proliferation of civil war.

The United Nations can help deal with the dialectic of globalization and fragmentation and help solve the problems it will create. It can do so because the United Nations was designed to be both the world Organization and the Organization of its Member States — designed, therefore, to respond both to global concerns and to the needs of Member States and their peoples. As if in training for precisely this moment, the United Nations in 50 years has gained experience in dealing with both globalization and fragmentation.

In response to globalization, the United Nations defined human rights for the global community. It fostered the progress of international law. It transformed the law of the sea. Through a continuum of global conferences it is promoting international consensus on new global issues of disarmament, environment, population, social development and migration.

In response to fragmentation, the United Nations has been called upon to respond to civil wars: Katanga, Cambodia, El Salvador, Angola and Mozambique. To prevent fragmentation, the United Nations is promoting democratization both within and among States. Within States, issues of identity and ethnic separatism will be decided by the ballot box, not by the gun. Among States, democratization will promote the full participation of all States in world affairs.

But the United Nations cannot play this role if the present trend continues. The United Nations is trapped by a second dialectic. The problems of globalization and fragmentation have caused vast responsibilities to be given to the United Nations, but the United Nations has not been given the resources required to accomplish the tasks imposed.

The financial crisis is a symptom of a deeper problem: Member States simply do not regard the United Nations as a priority. This is sad news to report to this Meeting. I appeal to you to give the United Nations a firm financial base. If steps towards this cannot be set in motion by the end of this year, I urge you to give serious consideration to calling a special session of the General Assembly to deal with the financial crisis of the Organization.

This historic Meeting is a time for you, the leaders of the world, to consider what you want from the United Nations. I respectfully ask you to do this.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Before I call upon the first speaker this morning, may I again remind all delegations of the five-minute time limit. I hope that if there are exceptions they will be as limited as possible.

Address by His Excellency Mr. William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. William Clinton, President of the United States of America.

His Excellency Mr. William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Clinton: This week the United Nations is 50 years old. The dreams of its founders have not been fully realized. But its promise endures.

The value of the United Nations can be seen the world over: in the nourished bodies of once-starving children; in the full lives of those immunized against disease; in the eyes of students eager to learn; in the environment sustained; in the refugees saved; in the peace kept; and, most recently, in standing up for the human rights and human possibilities of women and their children, at the Beijing Conference.

The United Nations is the product of faith and knowledge: faith that different peoples can work together for tolerance, decency and peace; knowledge that this faith will be forever tested by the forces of intolerance, depravity and aggression. Now we must summon that faith — and act on that knowledge — to meet the challenges of a new era.

In the United States, some people ask: Why should we bother with the United Nations? America is strong. We can go it alone. Well we will act if we have to, alone. But my fellow Americans should not forget that our values and our interests are also served by working with the United Nations. The United Nations helps the peacemakers, the care-providers, the defenders of freedom and human rights, the architects of economic prosperity and the protectors of our planet to spread the risk, share the burden and increase the impact of our common efforts.

Last year I pledged that the United States would continue to contribute substantially to the finances of the United Nations. Historically the United States has been — and today it remains — the largest contributor to the United Nations. But I am determined that we must fully meet our obligations and I am working with our Congress on a plan to do so. All who contribute to the work of the United Nations and care about its future must also be committed to reform, to ending bureaucratic inefficiencies and outdated priorities. The United Nations must be able to show that the money it receives supports

saving and enriching peoples' lives — not unneeded overhead.

Reform requires breaking up bureaucratic fiefdoms; eliminating obsolete agencies; and doing more with less. The United Nations must reform to remain relevant, and to play a still stronger role in the march of freedom, peace and prosperity. We see it around the world. In the Middle East and Northern Ireland, people are turning from a violent past to a future of peace. In South Africa and Haiti, long nights of fear have given way to new days of freedom. Throughout this hemisphere every nation — except one — has chosen democracy. And the goal of an integrated, peaceful and democratic Europe is now within our reach for the first time.

In the Balkans, the international community's determination and the resolve of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) have made prospects for peace brighter than they have been for four long years. Let me salute the efforts of the United Nations on behalf of the people of Bosnia. The nations that took part in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) kept the toll of this terrible war — in lives lost; wounds left unhealed; children left unfed — from being far graver still. Next week, the parties to the war in Bosnia will meet in Dayton, Ohio, under the auspices of the United States and our Contact Group partners — Russia, the United Kingdom, France and Germany — to intensify the search for peace. Many fundamental differences remain. But I urge the parties to seize this chance for a settlement. If they achieve peace the United States will be there with our friends and allies to help secure it.

All over the world people yearn to live in peace and that dream is becoming a reality.

But our time is not free of peril. As the cold war gives way to the global village, too many people remain vulnerable to poverty, disease and underdevelopment. All of us are exposed to ethnic and religious hatred, the reckless aggression of rogue States, terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The emergence of the information-and-technology age has brought us all closer together and given us extraordinary opportunities to build a better future. But in our global village progress can spread quickly, but trouble can too. Trouble at the far end of town soon becomes a plague on everyone's house. We cannot free our own neighbourhoods from drug-related crime without the help of countries where the drugs are produced. We cannot track down terrorists without assistance from other Governments. We cannot prosper or preserve our environment unless sustainable development is a reality for all nations. And our vigilance alone cannot keep nuclear weapons stored half a world away from falling into the wrong hands.

Nowhere is cooperation more vital than in fighting the increasingly interconnected groups that traffic in terror, organized crime, drug smuggling and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. No one is immune: not the people of Japan, where terrorists unleashed nerve gas in the subway and poisoned thousands; not the people of Latin America or South-East Asia, where drug traffickers wielding imported weapons have murdered judges, journalists, police officers and innocent passers-by; not the people of Israel and France, where hatemongers have blown up buses and trains full of children with suitcase bombs made from smuggled explosives; not the people of the former Soviet Union and Central Europe, where organized criminals seek to weaken new democracies and prey on decent, hard-working men and women; and not the people of the United States, where home-grown terrorists blew up a federal building in the heart of America, and where foreign terrorists tried to topple the World Trade Center and plotted to destroy the very Hall we gather in today.

These forces jeopardize the global trend towards peace and freedom, undermine fragile new democracies, sap the strength from developing countries and threaten our efforts to build a safer, more prosperous world. So today I call upon all nations to join us in the fight against them. Our common efforts can produce results. To reduce the threat of weapons of mass destruction, we are working with Russia to reduce our nuclear arsenals by two thirds. We supported Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Belarus in removing nuclear weapons from their soil. We work with the states of the former Soviet Union to safeguard nuclear materials and to convert them to peaceful use. North Korea has agreed to freeze its nuclear programme under international monitoring. Many of the nations in this Hall succeeded in getting the indefinite extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

To stem the flow of narcotics and stop the spread of organized crime, we are cooperating with many nations, sharing information, providing military support and initiating anti-corruption efforts. Results are coming. With Colombian authorities we have cracked down on the cartels that control the world's cocaine market. Two

years ago they lived as billionaires beyond the law; now many are living as prisoners behind bars.

To take on terrorists we maintain strong sanctions against States that sponsor terrorism and defy the rule of law, States such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and Sudan. We ask them today again to turn from that path. Meanwhile we increase our own law enforcement efforts and our cooperation with other nations.

Nothing we do will make us invulnerable. But we can all become less vulnerable if we work together. That is why today I am announcing new initiatives to fight international organized crime, drug trafficking, terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction — initiatives we can take on our own and others we hope we will take together — in the form of an international declaration to promote the safety of the world's citizens.

First, the steps we will take: Yesterday I directed our Government to identify and put on notice nations that tolerate money-laundering. Criminal enterprises are moving vast sums of ill-gotten gains through the international financial system with absolute impunity. We must not allow them to wash the blood off profits from the sale of drugs, from terror or organized crime. Nations should bring their banks and financial systems into conformity with international anti-money-laundering standards. We will work to help them do so. If they refuse we will consider appropriate sanctions. Next I directed our Government to identity the front companies and to freeze the assets of the largest drug ring in the world, the Cali Cartel, to cut off its economic lifelines and stop our own people from dealing unknowingly with its companies. Finally, I have instructed the Justice Department to prepare legislation to provide our other agencies with the tools they need to respond to organized criminal activity.

But because we must win this battle together, I now invite every country to join in negotiating and endorsing a declaration on international crime and citizen safety.

That declaration should include, first, a no-sanctuary pledge so that we could say together to organized criminals, terrorists, drug traffickers and smugglers, "You have nowhere to run and nowhere to hide".

It should include, secondly, a counter-terrorism pact so that together we would urge more States to ratify existing anti-terrorism treaties and work with us to shut down the grey markets that outfit terrorists and criminals with firearms and false documents.

Thirdly, there should be an anti-narcotics offensive. The international drug trade poisons people, breeds violence and tears at the moral fabric of our societies. We must intensify action against the drug cartels and the destruction of drug crops, and we in consumer nations such as the United States must decrease demand for drugs.

Fourthly, we should have an effective police-force partnership. International criminal organizations target nations whose law-enforcement agencies lack the experience and capacity to stop them. To help police in the new democracies of Central Europe, Hungary and the United States established an International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest. Now we should consider a network of centres around the world to share the latest crime-fighting techniques and technology.

Fifthly, we need an illegal-arms and deadly-materials control effort that we all participate in. A package the size of a child's lunch bag held the poison gas used to terrorize Tokyo. A lump of plutonium no bigger than a soda can is enough to make an atomic bomb.

Building on efforts already under way with the States of the former Soviet Union and with our G-7 partners, we will seek to better account for, store and safeguard materials with massive destructive power. We should strengthen the Biological Weapons Convention, adopt a comprehensive test-ban treaty next year and ultimately eliminate the deadly scourge of land-mines. We must press other countries, and our own Congress, to ratify the Chemical Weapons Convention and to intensify our efforts to combat the global illegal arms network that fuels terrorism, equips drug cartels and prolongs deadly conflicts.

This is a full and challenging agenda, but we must complete it, and we must do so together.

Fifty years ago, as the conference that gave birth to the United Nations got under way in San Francisco, a young American war hero recorded his impressions of that event for a newspaper:

> "The average G.I. in the street doesn't seem to have a very clear-cut conception of what this meeting is about",

wrote the young John F. Kennedy.

"But one bemedalled marine sergeant gave the general reaction when he said: 'I don't know much about what's going on, but if they just fix it so that we don't have to fight any more, they can count me in.'"

The United Nations has not ended war, but it has made it less likely and helped many nations turn from war to peace. The United Nations has not stopped human suffering, but it has healed the wounds and lengthened the lives of millions of human beings. The United Nations has not banished repression or poverty from the Earth, but it has advanced the cause of freedom and prosperity on every continent. The United Nations has not been all that we wished it would be, but it has been a force for good and a bulwark against evil. So at the dawn of a new century so full of promise yet plagued by peril, we still need the United Nations. And so, for another 50 years and beyond, you can count the United States in.

The President: I thank the President of the United States of America for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, President of Ukraine

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, President of Ukraine.

His Excellency Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, President of Ukraine, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Kuchma (*interpretation from Ukrainian; English text furnished by the delegation*): Speaking from this loftiest rostrum on the planet, I feel pride, gratitude and hope. My pride is for the wisdom and far-sightedness of the founders of the United Nations, who actually laid the foundation of a new world order. Challenging history itself, they attempted to establish peaceableness and mutual assistance as forces to oppose hostility and intolerance, and for the first time this was done successfully. Thus, the peoples of the Earth received a unique instrument for consolidating mankind as a single universal organism in its efforts to survive and build a better world.

I am doubly proud of all that because representatives of my people were among the founders of the United Nations. The United Nations might have been the only universal forum in which Ukraine could proclaim its existence as a country. The support of the United Nations promoted the realization of our age-old aspiration to have a State of our own.

Finally, I place great hopes in the future of the United Nations, which brings us closer to the moment when we shall be able to say, "The United Nations means a united world."

With the era of great ideological confrontation behind us, mankind has managed to decrease the threat of self-destruction by nuclear conflagration and to establish sufficiently reliable mechanisms of international security.

I am pleased to point out that Ukraine has made a special contribution to the cause of disarmament. Ours, the third largest nuclear State, was the first in the world voluntarily to renounce nuclear status and nuclear weapons. However, this has entailed enormous economic and ecological losses for us.

I am certain that the establishment of a special status, with international security guarantees, consolidated financial and technical assistance and moral incentives, for countries that renounce nuclear weapons would provide a tremendous impetus for expediting the process of nuclear disarmament. This could be implemented through a new United Nations programme for a twenty-first-century world without nuclear weapons.

United Nations peace-keeping activities require constant improvement and increased efficiency. First and foremost, this would entail reorientation of conflicts towards preventive diplomacy. This would also be promoted by establishing United Nations trusteeship over new States in the process of formation, in order to make the use of force inadmissible and ensure adherence to established norms of international law.

At the same time, the international community should adapt its attitude to separatism — which is frequently the initial cause of local conflicts and which could become the severest challenge to the world of the twenty-first century — to present-day realities.

The disappearance of a world divided into antagonistic systems is related to profound internal transformations in post-socialist countries. I am convinced of the need to establish the most favourable regime possible for those countries' integration into the

international community. The establishment of a new United Nations council for economic security — on a level with the Security Council, equal to it in weight and influence — would promote the drafting of specific proposals for international support for those countries' development. Such a body could be used to identify strategic prospects for mankind's development and for preventive efforts in the decades ahead.

The United Nations was established by people who realized that nations, peoples and States are interdependent and complementary components of a single entity called humanity. The presence of an unprecedented number of world leaders here today is convincing evidence of their support for the United Nations at this crucial stage of its development. The most important task for the United Nations today is to define itself under these new conditions and to follow the road indicated by the real circumstances of our existence. To do this would constitute a source of strength, longevity and moral health for the United Nations.

The President: I thank the President of Ukraine for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Leonid D. Kuchma, President of Ukraine, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted to the rostrum.

His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal (*interpretation from Arabic*): It is with pleasure that I greet you all, and express my great pride to be among you today, to represent my country, Jordan, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations Organization. As I extend my sincere congratulations to you, I recall with esteem and reverence the founders who worked with diligence and sincerity to ingrain the principles of international legality to enhance the role of this Organization, and to safeguard its noble message.

I may not be the eldest head of State among you, but God has willed that I should be the longest serving, and the one who has dealt with the United Nations for the longest period. This has allowed me to follow its development over decades. I recall at an early age, witnessing the endeavours of men like Trygve Lie, Count Bernadotte, Ralph Bunche, Ambassador Pierre Spinelli, the outstanding man, Dag Hammerskjold, as well as Gunnar Jarring and many others who have served the cause of peace and stability in our region.

As we acknowledge our debt to the men and women of the United Nations who have worked over the years to preserve peace in our region, we Jordanians feel proud to have contributed to serve the same lofty ideals in other parts of the world. The number of Jordanians who participated in United Nations peace-keeping missions over the past years has reached almost 15,000 servicemen. Jordan, in point of fact, ranked fifth among the countries of the world in terms of troop contributions to those noble missions.

My country has suffered enormously from successive wars in the Middle East region which resulted in the tragedy of the Palestinian people. We absorbed the human consequences of their plight in an honourable, unparalleled way in the region. Jordan became the sanctuary and the homeland of all, regardless of their origins. When the cold war ended and we had the opportunity to end the Middle East conflict, we were fully aware that the comprehensive peace which we sought called for wisdom and courage on the part of all leaders. It required confidence in the rule of international legality to settle the differences amongst peoples. We have taken this path with confidence, and we have achieved a great deal.

Today we celebrate the first anniversary of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, which we hope will be a principal underpinning of the process of comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the region; that peace which will enable all the region's peoples to resume their quest for development and to build a better life for future generations.

Over the past year, we have been able to address comprehensively all the terms of the treaty governing future relations between Jordan and Israel. I am glad to announce from this platform that young pilots from the Royal Jordanian Air Force and the Israeli Air Force flew the skies of their two countries today in joint formations to honour their comrades who have fallen, to salute their peoples and to embody peace and the commitment to safeguard it.

Peace, poverty, and underdevelopment cannot co-exist in the same region. Hence, the Amman economic summit, which, in a few days, will herald a new drive for the comprehensive development of the region and underscore the concept of cooperation amongst the peoples of the region with a view to improving their standards of living, and in consolidating peace and regional cooperation amongst them.

Permit me, on this occasion, to thank this Organization for announcing last Friday the establishment of the United Nations University International Leadership Academy in Jordan. This academy will be the first of its kind for the promising leaderships in the world and the first branch of the United Nations University in the Middle East.

Fifty years have passed since the United Nations was founded. During this time, some of its Member States have undergone fundamental changes. This is a good moment to review the structure and systems of the international organizations and institutions. Of prime importance is a review of the Security Council and the nature of membership in it so that the Organization may reflect today's world. This is essential for the United Nations to rejuvenate itself and meet its new challenges.

Many regions of the world today continue to suffer from tensions and conflicts. Others dwell in the shadow of war and the resultant poverty, backwardness and abuses of human rights. It is high time that the international community moved to alleviate their suffering and help them to overcome their difficulties and their plight. In this respect, Jordan will continue to strive, propelled by its faith and convictions, to be a living example of harmonious pluralism in democracy, freedom and respect for human rights. Once again, I greet you all and I wish this Organization every success and progress. God bless you all.

The President: I thank the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for his statement.

His Majesty King Hussein Ibn Talal, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Her Excellency Mrs. Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by Her Excellency The Honourable Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

Her Excellency The Honourable Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga: Your Excellency, permit me to express my good wishes on your election as President. I am deeply honoured to represent the people of Sri Lanka on this historic occasion.

Sri Lanka has always reposed great hopes in the United Nations for effective collective action to achieve our central aim of socio-economic development and thereby ensure social stability and peace for our people.

The transition from the cold-war era to a new world order has shifted the arena of conflict from the international to the national. Whatever the overlay of such conflicts, whether they take on religious, racial or other forms, they stem from poverty and social inequality. We believe, therefore, that the foundations of peace must be built on economic and social stability.

The new agenda of the United Nations, with its heavy emphasis on peace-keeping operations, has impacted adversely on the development process.

As a developing country, Sri Lanka attaches great importance to the role that the United Nations can and must perform in advancing the development process. Unless the principles of the Declaration on the Right to Development, adopted in 1986, are applied positively, with the full commitment of both developed and developing countries, the development process will not be sufficiently advanced.

We believe that effective strengthening of the United Nations system is an essential requisite for advancing its goals. The Organization has, regrettably, sometimes come to be seen by the more vulnerable States as primarily serving the interests of the more powerful States. We welcome the timely initiative of the President of the General Assembly at last year's session to strengthen and empower the United Nations system.

Effective empowerment, in our view, requires: first, that development priorities should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of politico-military operations, which must be set at realistic — even modest — levels; secondly, that decision-making by the United Nations in all areas must be based on the full engagement of all Members, and the Security Council in particular must become more representative of and more responsive to the general membership of the United Nations; thirdly, that commitments made for multilateral action in all fields must be honoured and diligently pursued. In short, the revitalizing process must enhance the capacity of the United Nations, rather than merely effect economies and scale down its scope.

In the index of human development Sri Lanka rates high among developing countries, but we have been traumatized by ethnic tensions kept unnaturally high by the forces of terrorism and chauvinism. Nonetheless, my Government is resolved to fulfil its mandate by seeking, through political negotiations, solutions to our problems that would enable our people to live in peace, security and freedom.

There are, however, obstacles in our way. An armed group which claims to represent an ethnic minority has been engaged in violent acts against successive popularly elected Governments, preventing them from ensuring peace and justice for all in our land. This group, which also operates on foreign soil, maintains an international network for fund-raising based on coercion and blackmail. That network has a close nexus with powerful commercial interests engaged in narcotic trafficking, trade in illicit arms and smuggling of illegal immigrants. Concerted international action is essential to combat terrorism and to compel the terrorists to renounce violence and enter the democratic process. Unfortunately, effective action to that end has been frustrated through sterile philosophical debate about the nature of terrorism.

However, in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) we have overcome that difficulty by focusing our attention on manifestations of terrorism. The SAARC Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism provides for a collective response. This centres on a comprehensive legal regime and practical measures to combat terrorism.

I urge similar action by the United Nations to give legal effect to the obligations arising from the Declaration on the Elimination of Terrorism, adopted last year. I was happy to hear President Clinton's statement in this regard. I hope that our common realization of the terrible consequences of terrorism, drug trafficking and other such antisocial activities will usher in a new era of international cooperation to combat these problems.

My Government is committed to providing full opportunities in Sri Lanka for the development of the total human person. While promoting rapid economic growth, we seek to distribute its benefits equitably. This involves the maintenance of democratic institutions and the preservation of human rights. It makes of politics the discharge of a public trust, where decision-making is transparent and free of corruption and everyone in public life is accountable for their actions.

In the end, the United Nations will essentially be what we the Member States make of it — not what individual States seek to make from it.

On behalf of the Government and people of Sri Lanka, I take this opportunity to wish the United Nations success in its endeavours to transform the separate dreams of all the nations into a multifaceted, yet harmonious, reality.

The President: I thank the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka for her statement.

Her Excellency The Honourable Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia.

His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Nujoma: We are gathered here on this historic occasion to praise the United Nations for its outstanding achievements and, at the same time, to pay a well-deserved tribute to its founders.

Celebration of the birth, longevity and performance of the United Nations is proper and fitting indeed. The world has been a safer place because of the United Nations, and its continued relevance is beyond question.

Yet our thoughts focus beyond the celebration, on the future.

During the past 50 years, this Organization has served humanity as a universal market-place of great ideas and collective action. From its founding, the United Nations has had its critics — among them, some prophets of doom. But the truth is that after 50 years the Organization is alive and well. Its misfortunes are exaggerated. Failures are those of the Member States, and not of the United Nations.

The 50 years of the existence of the United Nations have brought the peoples of the world closer together than ever before. Indeed, today's world is truly a global village. During this period we have also witnessed tremendous breakthroughs in the fields of science and technology and information, as well as in respect for the worth of the human person and in consciousness of the environment.

We are now more than ever aware that this is our one world, belonging to all of us, rich and poor, developed and developing, big and small. Let us, therefore, together commit ourselves to keeping our planet, oceans and space safe and to developing the common heritage of humankind which they offer on a sustainable basis for all.

We in Namibia waged one of the last major battles in Africa against colonial tyranny and brutality. Decolonization is the most monumental accomplishment of the United Nations and humankind. Namibia stands out as a brilliant example of the decisive role played by the United Nations in this field.

The United Nations, it can be said, has used the Namibian experience to develop international norms of peace-keeping and modalities for political transformation. Let me, however, point out that the key to this success was the readiness of the Namibians themselves to cooperate with the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. This is a success story our Organization should be proud of.

In Namibia, we have fully incorporated democratic ideals, fundamental human rights, basic freedoms and the protection of the environment into our Constitution. We are now striving to imprint the ideals of the Constitution on the minds and hearts of our people. Happily, today, the rights of women, children, migrant workers and indeed all human beings are respected and defended worldwide in the constitutions and laws of many nations.

As we start the second jubilee of the United Nations, we must abandon past misconceptions as well as the way we conduct inter-State relations. Cold-war legacies must be replaced by cooperation in the emerging world order. A restructuring of the Security Council, which is long overdue, should be carried out in a manner that upholds the principles of democracy, the sovereign equality of States, equitable geographical representation and transparency. Only then can the legitimacy and effectiveness of the Council be enhanced. There is no shortage of workable ideas to bring about the necessary reform that will accommodate the vital interests of Africa, Asia and Latin America as permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council. Needless to say, the authority and importance of the General Assembly should not be compromised in the reform exercise.

Granted, the United Nations is far from perfect, but for us, it is the only truly viable forum in which developing and small nations like Namibia can raise their voices on the basis of equality. This Assembly stands at the centre of multilateral diplomacy and cooperation as originally envisioned by the Charter of the United Nations. Rededication, therefore, must start here.

During the next 50 years and beyond, the United Nations should stress interdependence, equity and fair play among nations and peoples in order to remove the ever-widening gap between the rich North and the poor South. The future belongs to the youth and children. Our collective duty must be to reinforce their vision for a peaceful, harmonious and prosperous future in the spirit of brotherhood and cooperation.

The President: I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Namibia for the statement he has just made.

His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia.

His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Chiluba: Let me happily congratulate you, Sir, and pay tribute to you on your deserved

election to the high office of President of the General Assembly at its fiftieth session. We are sure of the successful proceedings of the session under your able leadership.

I wish to reaffirm Zambia's abiding faith in the United Nations. I further wish to reiterate my country and Government's commitment to the articles of faith of the United Nations, to which we fully subscribe.

In a world of growing tensions and challenges, the United Nations has performed well since its inception in 1945 and deserves a word of appreciation and thanks. Some of its officers and personnel have made supreme sacrifices in the execution of their selfless tasks. Among them was the second Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, who died in a plane crash on 17 September 1961 on Zambia's soil. We must always remember all of them for their valour.

Zambia is fully convinced that the United Nations can and must do even better. Its efficiency must be augmented and fortified. Zambia therefore joins those countries which have called for a restructuring of the United Nations to enable it to cope with increased demands and challenges.

The United Nations today faces a crisis of confidence and expectations. The structures of 1945, designed and meant to service an almost homogeneous membership of 50 countries that has since increased almost fourfold, are no longer capable of serving and servicing the bigger and wider globe. Membership has increased in numbers as well as in regional diversity, which calls for equitable, broader representation. In the spirit of genuine representative democracy and good governance which the United Nations embodies and personifies, in the spirit of the equality of nations and in the search for genuine peace and security, the United Nations has to reform to embrace broader geographical representation.

The Security Council especially, we believe, can no longer be maintained as a sanctuary of the holy of holies, with only the original members acting as high priests and deciding on issues for the rest of the world, which cannot be admitted. Broader and geographical representation is the answer.

We believe that a restructured and more representative United Nations will be better equipped to respond to growing demands and challenges which have become multifarious in character.

Zambia also believes that efficiency may be a far cry until and unless all Member States honour their obligations and pay their financial subscriptions to the world body to enable it to meet increased demands and challenges.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Zambia for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Frederick J. T. Chiluba, President of the Republic of Zambia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey.

His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Demirel: It is an honour for me to address this historic meeting, and on this solemn occasion to renew our pledge to the global contract of humanity.

Fifty years ago, the United Nations was created to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in achieving a better world for all. The Charter of the United Nations was to provide the road map to a new international order. However, the initial hopes and aspirations of the founders turned into disillusionment during the dark days of the cold war. Now, there is a widespread revival of the positive spirit that prevailed half a century ago.

Some moments in history stand out as defining ones. At times they can be new beginnings, in which courses are set that shape decades, even centuries. Such should be the fiftieth anniversary. We should seize this moment to adapt the United Nations to the new challenges and demands of our times, and in this we must not fail.

This Organization was established to be a meeting point of men and women who believe in shared dreams. It is intended to be a forum in search of a collective conscience.

Expectations from the United Nations are rising. So are disappointments. We must improve our ability to address problems globally.

No nation can be fully at peace while its neighbour is not. With this awareness, we must base our actions on the interlocking concepts of democratic interdependence, market rationale, economic cooperation, international and constitutional legality, shared prosperity and solidarity. Together we must resolutely resist those who try to undermine our renewed hope and vision, those who openly defy our common values and international law.

Let us have faith in our strength. Let us not forget that to go forward at all is to go forward together. Let us be aware that the peoples of the world are strongly demanding the helping hand of the United Nations. Let us not disappoint them. Let us fashion a new plan of action to create a United Nations which will remain true to the ideals of its founders.

To this end, we must place preventive diplomacy at the top of our agenda; show resolve to thwart aggression in all its forms; renew our commitments to peacemaking and peace enforcement; redouble our efforts for a comprehensive and genuine reform process of the Organization; create a Security Council which is more representative, responsive, democratic and accountable; revisit the idea of collective security; increase the cooperation between the United Nations and the regional organizations; address the problems arising from United Nations-imposed sanctions and set up a mechanism for the effective implementation of Article 50 of the Charter; find creative ways and means to secure new financial resources; and maintain people-centred development at the core of our agenda for development.

With regard to the last point, I would like to invite all Heads of State and Government to Istanbul in June 1996 to take part in the City Summit, HABITAT II Conference, to discuss how sufficient housing, a healthy environment and social services can be provided for the billions of people living in the cities, as well as other human settlements of the world.

The future offers hope. Let us seize the opportunity and be firm in our commitment to our common destiny. Turkey has incurred the second highest loss of human life in peace operations under the United Nations flag. I solemnly reiterate Turkey's determination to continue to shoulder its share of global responsibility.

With these remarks, I would like to quote a great Turkish humanist and poet-philosopher, Yunus Emre who, seven centuries ago, made the following call to all the peoples of the world:

(spoke in Turkish)

"Gelin tanis olalim,
Isi kolay kilalim.
Sevelim, sevilelim,
Dünya kimseye kalmaz."

(spoke in English)

That means

"Come, let us get to know each other,
and make it easier for all of us.
Let us love and be loved,
For, this world is no one's to own forever"

This is the message I have brought to this historic meeting from the people of a country standing at the crossroads of continents and cultures and a country that stands dedicated to the noble principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Turkey for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Süleyman Demirel, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Piero Natalino Mularoni, Captain Regent of the Republic of San Marino

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Piero Natalino Mularoni on behalf of the Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino.

His Excellency Mr. Piero Natalino Mularoni, Captain Regent of the Republic of San Marino, was escorted to the rostrum.

Captain Regent Mularoni *(spoke in Italian; English text furnished by the delegation)*: In the space of 50 years, a man and a woman come into the world, grow up, obtain a diploma or learn a trade, get married and have children. Sometimes they live long enough to see and love their grandchildren.

Thus, three new generations have followed the first 50 years of the United Nations. A further one has to be added, then, if one considers the generation which

witnessed the establishment of the Organization after having experienced the tragic and painful reality of the World War.

War can be avoided by resorting to peaceful means, to negotiations and through the good will of those holding power or armed force. Despite this message, however, wars are still dramatic recurring events in every part of the world.

Although the arrogant and ambitious desire for supremacy remains the manifest, or concealed, cause of all wars, it is evident that — at least to a certain extent — the determining factors have changed.

No more wars! This is the strong and resolute appeal that the Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino wish to reiterate to this Assembly. Over the years, this very Hall has witnessed the celebration of many achievements, the real sharing and resolution of peoples' problems, the condemnation of unfair treatment and dictatorships, as well as the admission of many peoples once exploited by colonial regimes and oppressed by intolerant systems. Now, this Assembly is looking forward to the admission of more peoples, whose right to a homeland and to a territory must be finally recognized.

No more wars! This is the appeal of a small country which is also one of the newest United Nations Member States. San Marino regards this condition as a privilege to be proud of, and on this occasion it reaffirms its formal commitment to contribute its own share, to the extent made possible by its territorial dimensions and real possibilities.

The United Nations has also been able to elaborate and to teach a second fundamental concept: a new law of nations and a code of conduct for States.

Thanks to the true nature and to the consequences of this new law of States, the international community has started to reject the idea of a dangerous return to a division into military, economic and political blocs and, at the same time, to a new fragmentation. The contribution of all and the setting of common goals are, in fact, the indispensable foundations for the resolution of today's problems.

The capacity and strength of the United Nations in consolidating a third fundamental concept — a higher recognition of all human rights — must be generally acknowledged. In the achievement of this ambitious goal, the United Nations has been assisted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in its sphere of competence, and by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe, in the European area.

This last concept entails, *inter alia,* respect for the human person and human dignity; the principle of tolerance towards those who, despite all appearances, are equal to us; and respect for life, which is constantly endangered by wars, armaments, nuclear power, the death penalty and hunger. It includes respect for, and the conservation and restoration of, the environment, as an essential and primary component of life; the struggle against poverty, underdevelopment and the exploitation of peoples and of poverty-stricken areas; and, as a consequence, the commitment to social justice and solidarity.

Today, solidarity must take new and more humane forms. It can no longer be expressed through charitable acts determined by exceptional circumstances. On the contrary, solidarity has to be translated into a concerted plan of assistance and be considered a common duty of the entire international community. This assumption leads to the consequent sharing of the problems of all and to participation in their resolution.

Moreover, this concept asserts respect for the fundamental freedoms of all individuals and citizens and the observance of their effective and full enjoyment, as well as the participation of all citizens in the sharing of power, through the democratic rules of representation, transparency, control and alternation.

In particular, the Captains Regent wish to stress the right of all peoples to land and to its natural and inalienable use, and recommend the total elimination of the aberrant practices of slavery, torture and the death penalty. We encourage respect for, and the safeguarding of, the rights of minorities and the possibility for any people or minority to maintain and promote their cultural identity. Finally, the Captains Regent wish to advocate peace, the fundamental basis of which is the peaceful and democratic coexistence of all citizens within States, with full respect for the rights of every human person and of all.

On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of San Marino, the Captains Regent, through this universal Assembly, express the wish that the United Nations may continue its work for many, many years, and wish it even greater success in accepting, meeting

and resolving the difficult challenges of the third millennium.

It is our sincere hope that here, through the universality of this Organization, the participation of all, and the equal rights and opportunities granted to all Members, the States may formulate with impartiality the policies that will determine the future of each human being, ensuring freedom, health, well-being and equality for all.

The President: I thank the Captain Regent of the Republic of San Marino for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Piero Natalino Mularoni, Captain Regent of the Republic of San Marino, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: The last few speakers have strictly respected the five-minute time limit. I wish to express my appreciation to them. I wish also to appeal to the remaining speakers to exercise the same restraint. I thank them in advance for their cooperation.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia.

His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Meri: Our fathers, who fought in the First World War and in the wars of freedom from colonialism that followed, which in turn inspired United States President Wilson's Fourteen Points on the rights of self-determination, created the League of Nations.

The League of Nations embodied much idealism and little realism. It was not able to halt the game of division played by Hitler and Stalin, nor was it able to stop the agonized agitation of colonial dinosaurs or to break the chain of anti-colonial wars that followed and cost between 60 million and 100 million human lives.

President Roosevelt hoped to secure stability in the world by a combination of realism and idealism. Idealism reigned in this world parliament, where each State, whether 1 million or 1,000 million strong, was equal to the others. Realism, on the other hand, was the dominant force in the Security Council, in which the Allies of the Second World War exercised the right of veto.

This is how, 50 years ago, the United Nations was called into life.

Let us consider for a moment the numbers. When the United Nations was conceived, there were 50 Member States. Today, there are 185. The Republic of Estonia has followed this development with great attention, for three reasons.

First, the occupation of the independent Republic of Estonia by the Red Army pushed us for 50 years into the ranks of colonized peoples. We are sympathetic to their concerns, because we value the right to self-determination, independence and democracy. At the same time, we are an old democracy. We are a State that was born out of the decomposition of an empire, as was Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary and many other States.

This is a unique state of affairs. We belong at the same time to the first and the third worlds. We hold the same values, principles and goals as the first world, and experience the disappointments and concerns of the third world.

Secondly, one result of the end of colonial empires was the birth of new States. Most of those States, called "new democracies", are comparable with Estonia from the standpoint of population and land mass. Today, and in this Hall, this is less a geographic than a political attribute. Small States are, by definition, more easily wounded, which means that in a security vacuum small States are more sensitive to barometric changes than large ones. Besides common ideals, we also have common concerns.

Thirdly, as I have noted, those States that have risen from the end of colonialism and neocolonialism form a majority in our world community. Unfortunately, this is a silent majority. Its voice is weak and ineffectual in this global forum; its voice is not present in the Security Council.

I speak of this here and now because hope springs eternal. For this reason, I have two proposals: first, we should consider the idea of a rotating member in the Security Council chosen from among the world's small States. Secondly, I call upon the small States of the world

to gather in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, to draft a declaration: the Tallinn Declaration of Small States.

I make these proposals based on the hope that lies in the silent majority of this world Organization. We, the small nations, are easily wounded; thus we are more sensitive. Because we are more sensitive, we are able to react more quickly. Because we are able to react more quickly, we are consequently more idealistic. Small States are more idealistic, so it follows that a more active hope and a desire to remain true to our principles lives in our midst. It was this hope, it was this dedication to principles upon which, under other circumstances, this Organization was founded 50 years ago.

By next December, you, all the States Members of the United Nations, will receive a draft of the Tallinn Declaration of Small States. This will allow us enough time to consider it and, next September in Tallinn, to gather together in order to work out a mechanism that will turn this silent majority into a constructive majority, whose decisions will help us to fulfil, in a constructive manner, the purposes and principles upon which this Organization is based.

Be well aware of the protocol of this historic meeting. I await your reactions here and now to my proposals, and I look forward to seeing you next September in Tallinn, the capital town of Estonia.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Estonia for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Lennart Meri, President of the Republic of Estonia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Kim Young Sam, President of the Republic of Korea

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Kim Young Sam, President of the Republic of Korea.

His Excellency Mr. Kim Young Sam, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Kim (*spoke in Korean; interpretation provided by the delegation*): First of all, I would like to pay tribute to the leaders who founded this world body half a century ago and to the courage and the hope for the future they shared after overcoming the despair and frustration born of two world wars. Their dreams of a better world have already changed our planet tremendously, and have affected each one of us. I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt respect for all those who have spearheaded the effort to fulfil the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

The world is undergoing drastic change. Riding the crest of the information age and globalization, not only is the international order undergoing an epochal change, but human civilization itself is being radically transformed.

Change and reform in the United Nations are necessary if the Organization is to create and maintain the new world order. While welcoming a series of discussions which have been held on reform of the United Nations, I would like to express my views on this issue.

First, the United Nations has to be democratized and made more efficient; and every region of the world must be more equitably represented on the Security Council. In particular, I agree with many other Member nations that the number of Council members with veto power — a power that has crippled the United Nations for a long time — should not be raised.

Secondly, the United Nations function of preventing conflict should be strengthened.

Thirdly, the United Nations must respond more actively to demands for economic, social and environmental development. In order to attain true world peace and security, economic and social conflicts in the international community have to be resolved at all costs.

Fourthly, the United Nations has to actively undertake activities that give priority to human beings and families. The ideas of human security and family values put forward at the United Nations World Summit for Development last March will be the most important goal for people around the world in the twenty-first century.

Fifthly, new plans must be established for burden-sharing and for the administration of the additional budget arising from the strengthening of United Nations functions. I believe that the sooner the United Nations undergoes change and reform, the better it will be for our world. To that end, I hereby propose that a special session of the General Assembly on United Nations reform be held.

The Republic of Korea was established in accordance with a United Nations resolution in 1948. At that time it was one of the poorest countries in the world. Today, it is the eleventh-largest economy in the world and a truly democratic nation. Our success has been a great manifestation of the ideals of the United Nations.

We are now one of the Member nations most active in United Nations activities around the globe. We are already participating in United Nations peace-keeping operations in Western Sahara, the Republic of Georgia, Angola and elsewhere. The Republic of Korea will also actively take part in various United Nations development and environmental projects, and will increase its monetary contributions. In order to help eradicate diseases among children around the world, the Republic of Korea is building an International Vaccine Institute in Korea with help from the United Nations Development Programme.

I am convinced that the Korean peninsula will surely be unified in a democratic way in the not too distant future. I humbly and sincerely ask you all to become solid supporters of the peaceful unification of Korea.

I sincerely hope that this special United Nations summit meeting will be recorded as a bright milestone in world history. We share the cherished desire to turn the twenty-first century into an age of a true global community in which we can coexist and prosper together. Only through our political will and participation in the United Nations can we turn our hopes and dreams into reality.

I hereby respectfully propose that a United Nations summit meeting be held regularly, every five years, and that its first meeting be held in the year 2000.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Korea for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Kim Young Sam, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Franjo Tudjman, President of the Republic of Croatia

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Franjo Tudjman, President of the Republic of Croatia.

His Excellency Mr. Franjo Tudjman, President of the Republic of Croatia, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Tudjman *(spoke in Croatian; English text furnished by the delegation):* On the threshold of a new millennium, it is my privilege to address the greatest Summit of world leaders, by which we mark the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations Organization.

So much power has convened today under the roof of the General Assembly Hall, and yet, so little power to provide the necessary solutions leading to a better common future for our peoples and for our entire planet. We are faced with a long and arduous road, but we can look back with pride on the 50 years of our common history.

The disintegration of colonial and ideological empires has given rise to new, modern States, and the number of United Nations Members has increased almost fourfold since the founding of the Organization.

The historical process of democratization could not stop at mere reform of political systems, but, rather, it called for a comprehensive transformation. The totalitarian Iron Curtain that cut across Europe was brought down not only by the determined policy of the Western democratic alliance, but also by the freedom-loving aspirations of nations having small populations and a great historical heritage.

Destiny has allotted to small nations the role of promoters of great ideas. They are the leaders of positive changes in the evolution of humankind that turn the force of a struggle for national survival into a creative vision of tomorrow's world — no longer a world of the large and small, the powerful and weak, but only a world of equal nations and States committed to coexistence.

The boundaries of our freedoms are set by boundaries of the freedom of others. The affirmation of human dignity and the universal rights of the individual upheld by the Charter of the United Nations can be achieved only through respect for different ethnic, religious, cultural and political identities, through an efficient system of collective security, and through respect for a law-governed State and international law. We have to turn negative energy into positive momentum. Reform of global relations and mechanisms must provide for greater respect for civilizational differences, for their creative blending and dialogue on an equal footing. A multipolar world is more stable than a bipolar world and it is the future of humankind.

The global order can no longer be based solely on the special position of the anti-fascist coalition or the nuclear club, or on economic or military power; rather, first and foremost, it should be based on the real contribution of individual countries to the prevention of every form of totalitarianism and to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; on their role within global socio-economic development; on their democratic achievement; and on their regional importance. Thus, for example, we must take into account the present democratic and economic resources of Germany and Japan — countries deserving a permanent seat on the Security Council on the basis of all criteria.

The United Nations must also be a garden of ideas related to general human values, international solidarity and an equitable international order. Our responsibility for narrowing the gap in economic development and for promoting coordinated development of all parts of our planet is equal to our responsibility for global peace.

As one of five successor States of the former Yugoslavia, Croatia also considers itself a founder of the United Nations, a part of the heritage entered into the Charter 50 years ago. Having followed a long tradition of great humanistic visions — from pan-Slavic, pan-European, non-aligned, ecumenical to universal — the people of Croatia have also incorporated the noble ideals of the Charter into their culture.

The citizens of Croatia appreciate the values of multilateral United Nations mechanisms, through which emancipation of the Croatian State and the establishment of full sovereignty throughout its territory have been internationalized and achieved. On this occasion, Croatia expresses its gratitude to the United Nations, in particular for the enormous humanitarian effort that alleviated the suffering of hundreds of thousands of displaced persons within Croatia and of refugees from neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are entering into the new round of negotiations with the hope that they will bring about the end of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia and find a formula for a just and lasting peace. To the citizens of Croatia and its democratically elected Government, a just peace means establishing Croatia's full sovereignty throughout its territory within its internationally recognized borders. Croatia sincerely hopes that an agreement will soon be reached on the peaceful reintegration of 4.6 per cent of still-occupied Croatian land. At the same time, we remain prepared to take other necessary steps as well, if timely reintegration of Eastern Slavonia, Baranya and Western Sreeyem is not incorporated into the final plan for the region.

We have shown that we have courage in war, but be assured that we have even more courage for peace.

Excellencies, because of our responsibility for peace, freedom and the well-being of our peoples, we, as leaders, must rise above all our other interests and differences. We, the leaders of the modern world, are faced with a great responsibility: we must be united and rise above our distinct personal, party and national interests, and seek the vision of a new world which will hold a future for every individual, every nation and State, for the universality of spirit and for the tolerance of the different. Let the noble visions of the new millennium rest on peace and prosperity of all nations, on harmony in the global family of sovereign States whose common beacon is the United Nations.

The President: I thank the President of the Republic of Croatia for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Franjo Tudjman, President of the Republic of Croatia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Boris N. Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation.

His Excellency Mr. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Yeltsin (*interpretation from Russian*): Half a century ago an event occurred that paved the way for a new period in the history of mankind. Divided and bleeding, the world understood that its only future was the path of mutual understanding and interaction.

Only the United Nations will be able to realize the perennial dream of a world without wars and violence; of a world where controversial issues are settled through negotiation; of a world worthy of the human being and mankind.

But, while having won a world war, we have not yet managed to win peace. The creative capabilities of the

world community were for decades hampered by the cold war. It neither benefited any people nor made any people any happier. The end of the cold war has become our common victory. Democratic Russia has made an unquestionable contribution to its achievement.

Nuclear missiles are no longer targeted at each other. But such threats as terrorism, aggressive nationalism, crime and drug abuse are now aimed at each and every one of us. Along with integration, the rifts of estrangement and distrust among States and peoples are emerging.

There is a dangerous tendency to play down the role of the United Nations, to circumvent its Charter and the collective will of the Security Council.

Today, the world more than ever before needs not only equality and tolerance, but also respect for the identity of each State and an understanding of the peculiarities of its history. Each of them is able and willing to make its contribution to the development of the world community and to find an adequate place therein. We should not allow the revival of the atmosphere of animosity and prejudice against countries and peoples.

Does the United Nations have the ability to achieve these goals? In the opinion of Russia, it does. The United Nations can and should become the main instrument for building new international relations. It has all the necessary powers to do so. To carry out this mission it should be provided with appropriate means, including financial resources. Russia meets, and will continue to meet, its obligations to the United Nations.

Certainly, the United Nations has not been able to achieve success in all areas, but the roots of its failure lie, first and foremost, in ourselves, in the behaviour of States and organizations.

Russia is concerned at the situation in which, as has recently been the case in Bosnia, the Security Council was relegated to the sidelines of events. It represents an obvious and clear-cut violation of the basic principles of the world Organization, laid down by its founders. It is inadmissible for a regional organization to take decisions on the massive use of force, bypassing the Security Council.

Russia has worked hard to bring peace closer in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are ready to support the operation on the implementation of a peace agreement with the participation of multinational forces, including Russian forces, but only under a clear-cut mandate of the United Nations Security Council. Military force should never be used in those cases where diplomacy has not been given enough time to succeed. The effects of that would be tragic.

Recently there has been much discussion about the difficult task of revitalizing the United Nations. A lively debate is under way on the issue of the enlargement of the Security Council. We advocate such a reorganization provided only, of course, that the responsibility of the Security Council is increased and the interests of different regions of the world are taken into account.

The main concern of Russia is to achieve stability in Europe and Asia. We are in favour of establishing a security system based on compromises rather than on pressure. European security is indivisible: there is no alternative to that. It is precisely for this reason that Russia supports the idea of the earliest possible establishment of a new system of all-European security wherein all European States would be represented. And this is precisely the reason why we are against the eastward expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. It will put a barrier in the way of the establishment of a unified Europe.

The question is an extremely acute one: either such a system would be established for all of Europe or, as in the past, only for a select few. The strengthening of one bloc today means new confrontation tomorrow. This is not the way to build a just world order. It should be based on different principles.

Russia is in favour of a world order in which priority is given to international law and international cooperation.

Russia is in favour of a world order in which a comprehensive security system is put into effect. Russia is in favour of a world order in which steady advance is ensured towards a world free of weapons of mass destruction, a world in which the reduction of conventional weapons is under way.

We are in favour of a world order in which the role of the United Nations as an instrument for achieving peace, settling conflicts and providing development assistance is increasing.

Russia proposes the holding in 1999 of a third Peace Conference. The first one took place in 1899 at the initiative of our country. The third one may be devoted

solely to developing the bases for the settlement of conflicts emerging after the cold war.

It is also necessary to find a solution to long-standing issues, especially issues such as nuclear disarmament, the complete cessation of nuclear-weapon tests and control over conventional weapons.

Today, as 50 years ago, we should unite once again to eliminate the legacy of the cold war and to find worthy answers to the challenges of our times.

The United Nations represents the common will of the States of the world. Let us act in accordance with its norms and principles. And then, peace, justice and international law will prevail on Earth. Russia believes in the United Nations, which was born in the middle of the twentieth century and is making its way firmly into the twenty-first century.

The President: I thank the President of the Russian Federation for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Boris Yeltsin, President of the Russian Federation, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba

The President: The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba.

His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, was escorted to the rostrum.

President Castro Ruz *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Half a century ago the United Nations was born after the conclusion of a monstrous war, at the peak of which an average of 10 million lives were lost. At present, 20 million men, women and children are dying of hunger and curable diseases every year. In some wealthy nations there is a life expectancy of up to 80 years while in other nations there is an expectancy of hardly 40, so there are billions whose lives are cut off. How long shall we wait for this carnage to end?

The cold war is over but the arms race goes on, and nuclear and military hegemonism perpetuate themselves. How long shall we wait for the complete removal of all weapons of mass extermination, for universal disarmament and for the elimination of the use of force, arrogance and pressure in international relations?

The obsolete veto privilege and the ill-use of the Security Council by the powerful are exalting a new colonialism within the very United Nations.

Latin America and Africa do not have a single permanent member in the Security Council. In Asia, India has a population of almost one billion but it does not enjoy that responsibility.

How long, how long shall we wait for the democratization of the United Nations and for the independence and sovereign equality of States to become a reality? How long before non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and true international cooperation take their rightful places?

Breakthroughs in science and technology are increasing daily in number but their benefits do not reach the majority of mankind and they continue essentially to be at the service of a reckless consumerism which is wasting limited resources and seriously threatening life on Earth. How long shall we have to wait before rationality, equity and justice prevail in the world?

Mr. Zeroual (President of Algeria), Vice-President of the General Assembly, took the Chair.

The forests are decreasing, the air is being poisoned, the rivers are being contaminated. Countless species of plants and animals are perishing. The soils are impoverished. Old and new epidemics are expanding, while the population grows and the legions of the dispossessed continue to multiply.

Will the next generations reach the promised land pledged half a century ago? How many hundreds of millions have already died without ever seeing it? How many have fallen victim to oppression, plunder, poverty, hunger and unhealthy living conditions? How many more will still die?

We lay claim to a world without hegemonism, without nuclear weapons, without interventionism. without racism, without national or religious hatred, without outrageous acts against the sovereignty of any country, a world with respect for the independence and self-determination of peoples, a world without universal

models that totally disregard the traditions and culture of all the components of mankind.

We lay claim to a world without ruthless blockades that cause the death of men, women and children, young and old, like noiseless atom bombs.

We lay claim to a world of peace, justice and dignity where everyone, without exception, has the right to well-being and to life.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Fidel Castro Ruz, President of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cuba, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam.

His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted to the rostrum.

His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah: I am delighted to join you in celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations. In doing so, I convey the best wishes of my Government and the people of Brunei Darussalam. We greet you in the spirit of peace and international friendship.

We are commemorating a unique historic event. No international organization has endured for five decades. The League of Nations failed after less than three. That the United Nations has survived the long and dangerous years of the cold war is no small achievement. Among its many other achievements is the way it eased the path from colonization to independence for more than 100 countries.

It is fashionable to criticize the United Nations. Some of the criticisms are valid. Bosnia and Rwanda represent failures of will and policy that will haunt all Members for a long time. We should also have more rigorous financial controls over spending, and Members must honour their dues so that the United Nations can have the resources to carry out its mandates.

But let us not forget: it is we ourselves as Members who must take the ultimate responsibility for its failures, because as an Organization of sovereign States the United Nations can do no more than its Members empower it to do.

The shortcomings of some peace-keeping operations should not obscure the honour due those who have sacrificed their lives in many successful peace-keeping and humanitarian operations. We owe much to them.

We must also give credit to the United Nations for the sterling service rendered by its specialized agencies. Health, education, agriculture and the work of other specialized agencies may not have captured the headlines, but they have contributed much to the making of a better world. Many dedicated professionals and volunteers have given valuable, if unpublicized, service.

The international environment today is vastly different from that of 1945. We face new global issues, even while several old ones still remain to be solved. Economics is high on the international agenda. Free markets and open competition have become a basis for economic cooperation. That most countries in the world are now concentrating on economic issues is an advance over a world preoccupied with ideological conflicts.

The United Nations is still the best Organization to uphold a world order based on international law and the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity. Interdependence between nations has increased but has not displaced the sovereignty of nations as the basic principle in international relations.

The United Nations gives all Members, large and small, an equal voice. This is important for small States like Brunei Darussalam. The United Nations must change to meet new challenges, but I hope it will continue to give small nations an adequate voice in its deliberations.

It is in this spirit that Brunei Darussalam pledges to work with fellow Members to ensure that the United Nations remains a force for peace and progress.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, for his statement.

His Majesty Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Batalla, Vice-President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Assembly will next hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Hugo Batalla, Vice-President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

His Excellency Mr. Hugo Batalla, Vice-President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Batalla (*interpretation from Spanish*): As the representative of Uruguay, a nation with a deep-seated democratic tradition and a founding Member of the United Nations, I would not wish to make use of this lofty and universal podium merely to engage in rhetoric celebrating the first half-century of the San Francisco Charter.

It would be pointless for us to come here today to run through the political successes the United Nations has achieved over these 50 years, though successes it has had indeed, on the basis of the universalization of the idea of freedom and democracy, to which it made a decisive contribution. Nor shall we emphasize the aspects relating to the sustainable development of mankind which over the same period not only have remained unresolved but in large areas of the world have become considerably worse.

Uruguay has for many years been actively and increasingly involved in the maintenance of peace, a fundamental task of the United Nations in which major successes have been achieved.

Currently, in terms of our population and the size of our armed forces, we are the world's major contributor of personnel to peace-keeping operations.

Nevertheless, these operations cannot be transformed into the Organization's priority objective; rather, the essential part of the activities of the United Nations must focus on preventing conflicts that affect international peace and security, and to this end its role as a forum for ongoing dialogue where disputes are discussed and resolved by peaceful means needs to be strengthened.

Fundamental as it is, silencing weapons does not put an end to the most serious scourge of mankind, namely the hunger and abject poverty which hundreds of millions of human beings are suffering.

Hunger, poverty and subhuman living conditions have claimed more victims in the world than all wars taken together. They have decimated and continue to decimate entire peoples in various regions. At this very moment, millions of children are dying of hunger, at a time when hundreds of millions of square kilometres of fertile land lie unexploited or underexploited as a result, among other things, of the prevailing economic conditions, inequitable international trading relations and the crushing debt burden.

Freedom and democracy are tender plants and their stability is constantly threatened if nations do not at the same time achieve an appropriate and just economic and social environment. The persistence of acute manifestations of underdevelopment, apart from forcing millions of people to live degrading lives — something which the moral conscience of mankind cannot tolerate — also constitutes a latent and persistent threat to the security of all. The success in silencing the guns in various conflicts and the contribution to the elimination of apartheid and to the tearing down of the solid edifice of colonialism that had lasted almost five centuries are undoubtedly — among others — great achievements of the international community, and the United Nations can justly feel proud of them. But the Organization now needs to rethink itself in order to devote all its resources — human, financial, institutional and technical — to the great undertaking of redressing the unjust economic and social imbalances and the related problems of the environment, in the conviction that this is not only a moral imperative but the ideal way of strengthening peace.

The so-called underdeveloped world is not calling on the international community for hand-outs or privileged positions in trade; all it is asking for is fair, transparent and egalitarian treatment, with terms of trade that are not distorted by political pricing, hidden subsidies and dumping — practices whose persistence in international trade causes real havoc in the economies of a large number of nations.

The demands of the new international situation also make it desirable for the United Nations to establish closer links of cooperation and coordination — especially in the field of human rights — with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, whose membership covers the broadest political, ideological and philosophical spectrum

of nations, thus ensuring the pluralism from which democracy draws its strength.

Unless the Organization effectively demonstrates its ability to guarantee the international legal order over and above "international policies" dominated by the most powerful nations, under which economic and trade embargoes are imposed and the principles of non-intervention are violated, the international system will without doubt soon be in its painful and prolonged death throes.

Today, as we commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Organization we are, for all the foregoing reasons, living through an anxious and uncertain present in which even human values themselves are called in question. It is our responsibility to look ahead and, all of us working together, to build on today's anxiety a brighter tomorrow in which all people, whatever their colour, their gender, their religious creed or the place where they live, will have the right, recognized as theirs by the international community, to a life of dignity with access to all the benefits that civilization affords.

The eyes of the world are on us today; we are being called on to take up this challenge, to which Uruguay pledges its best efforts. Time will tell if we have been able to fulfil this hope which we must awaken in all our fellow human beings.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the Vice-President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Hugo Batalla, Vice-President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency The Right Honourable James Brendan Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency The Right Honourable James Brendan Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand.

His Excellency The Right Honourable James Brendan Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Bolger (New Zealand): Fifty years ago a vision was bravely stated of a world with equal rights for all, free from poverty and the scourge of war. Today we claim not victory, but progress.

Fifty years on the world is very different. The family of nations is larger and more diverse. Communications technology means that we live in a world without walls. That brings a profound change in the way our global neighbourhood operates. It is changing the dynamics of politics and business. Small countries, as well as large, can play a full part in a true global economy.

While aid is important in meeting immediate needs, true independence and prosperity will only come through genuine free trade, which enables each country to use its resources to the best advantage. The new World Trade Organization has much to do to achieve that goal. The nations of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (APEC) agreed in Bogor last year to free trade by 2010 for the industrial nations of this important Asia-Pacific group, and by 2020 for the developing members. We now need this sort of political courage on a global scale. Global free trade is an idea whose time has come.

Equally, the time has come for a new commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons. This Assembly, in its very first session, grappled with the nuclear problem and asked for proposals for the elimination of atomic weapons. New Zealand believed then, as now, that nuclear weapons should be eliminated. Some progress has already been achieved. Several States have abandoned their nuclear capability and some nuclear-weapon States are making significant reductions to their nuclear arsenals — an action which New Zealand applauds.

Against this background New Zealand finds it inexplicable and unacceptable that China and France are still testing nuclear weapons. Continued nuclear explosions send all the wrong signals. What we need is a strategy to achieve the goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. It is not an impossible goal. All member nations which are parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty are already committed to a world without nuclear weapons. It is only a question of how we achieve it.

The welcome announcement that the United States, Britain and France will support the South Pacific Nuclear-Free Zone Treaty is a positive step forward. Next year we must complete the comprehensive test-ban treaty. Then we must ban the production of uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons. And there must be further substantial reductions in the nuclear arsenals of all

five nuclear Powers. Then the hope of the first session of this Assembly, of a future without nuclear weapons, will be within our grasp.

In arguing for a world without nuclear weapons, I wish to state with equal firmness that global security cannot be separated from global prosperity and human rights. Economic development and good governance will help to eliminate those sources of tension which tempt States to invest in arms, the infrastructure of death, rather than health and education, which are the infrastructure of life.

Those who founded this Organization had a vision of a better world. Some of that vision has been achieved. The United Nations decolonization efforts are an important example. The spread of human rights and democracy and United Nations support for the role of women, for a fair trading system, for the protection of the environment — all these achievements must be recognized and celebrated.

Today the generation raised in the shadow of the cold war has the opportunity to direct its energy to the protection and enhancement of the planet, not its destruction, and to use technology to share information, provide education and enhance the wonders of medical science.

Let us put religious and other differences to one side and learn to live with diversity. There is so much we can accomplish by working together.

To achieve these goals, and more, we will have to renew our Organization. The Security Council must be reformed, and waste and duplication eliminated. Members of the United Nations must break the bad habit of expecting something for nothing. To make our Organization work, all must pay their dues.

The United Nations is a bold concept. It brings the nations of the world together in a grand coalition to share the burden of building a better and more peaceful world. Let each of us, in this fiftieth-anniversary year, renew our commitment to achieving that goal, and in doing so pay tribute to those who have pursued the work of the United Nations these last 50 years.

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): I thank the Prime Minister of New Zealand for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. James Brendan Bolger, Prime Minister of New Zealand, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland

The Acting President (*interpretation from Arabic*): The Assembly will next hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland.

His Excellency Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Oleksy: The present jubilee of the United Nations is conducive to joint reflection on the state of the world today, a reflection focused on concern for the fate of what is only one Earth.

For several years now, the world order imposed by the cold war, founded upon a confrontational, bipolar power arrangement, a balance of terror and military might, has passed into history. We must therefore participate soberly and imaginatively in a forward-looking manner, refusing to be swayed by stereotypes, complexes and old resentments, in the process of shaping our mutual relations.

Let the evolution of my country's relations with Germany serve as an example. It was Poland which a year ago proposed to the General Assembly that the archaic enemy-States clause be removed from the United Nations Charter. "Cold peace" is not an acceptable option as a prescription for our post-cold-war times. We must not allow new Berlin Walls, this time of an economic nature, or Iron Curtains, cutting across the continent and separating nations, to re-emerge in Europe. We need more Channel Tunnels.

The message behind these observations reaches beyond the old continent. Overcoming the development gap between North and South, along with its grave social implications, must become the overriding goal of this Organization. It must at last spur us to action, not merely provoke lamentations over supposedly inexorable trends.

Every State can and should take a critical and creative view of its geopolitical situation. Let us seek friends near and far and enemies nowhere. Let me again refer to my own country. We have traditionally — and, for that matter, not unreasonably — regarded Poland's

geopolitical situation to be unfavourable, even disastrous. More than once it was Poland's lot to be caught in a vice. Now we now have learned the lesson, and we know how to make the most of our situation. Poland has a chance of acting as a keystone between Atlantic Europe and the east of Europe. After all, it borders countries of both the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Commonwealth of Independent States. We seek to contribute to uniting Europe. We have succeeded in concluding treaties of friendship and good-neighbourly relations with each and every one of our neighbours. After all, not one of them is exactly the same neighbour that we had only a few years ago.

The President returned to the Chair.

The cornerstone of the foreign policy pursued by the successive Governments of Poland after 1989 has been a determined "drive to Europe", an orientation towards integration with the European Union and entry into the Euro-Atlantic structures. In no way does this mean turning our back on others, whether in the East — especially Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and the Baltic States — or the South — the regions and nations of the third world, including China, which is the largest and, in the last few years, the fastest growing of them all. Despite the burden of the radical reforms under way, we do not intend to shut ourselves within our borders or those of the subregion.

Our rank among the nations committing Blue Helmets to the various trouble spots around the globe is conclusive evidence that we are capable of looking beyond our own back yard. It is with this intent that we have resolved to seek election to the Security Council, a supreme body responsible for maintaining peace on a global scale.

Of a similar stamp is Poland's active role in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, as well as our guest status in the Non-Aligned Movement. All this is in tune with and complements our striving to enter the European Union, NATO, the Western European Union and, hopefully, before very long, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). That is how we understand active sovereignty. Everyone should ask himself the question, "What can I do to help others, to build a better world?"

We often try to fend off charges levelled — fairly or otherwise — at the United Nations, as if they had nothing to do with us. Yet the credit or blame for its effectiveness or inefficiency falls on us. That depends on the degree of consensus in our midst and our readiness to contribute to the Organization's budget and support its activities in various fields. Both are crucial also to the fate of reforms in the United Nations system, improved coordination of its actions and a better harmonization of its objectives, as the developing countries urge, not without justification.

The world needs devoted leadership, commitment and far-sighted vision as much as it needs oxygen. It needs perseverance in the promotion of trust between States and their organizations, between nations and between people. In developing these values and providing enlightened guidelines, a reinforced United Nations can and should play a special role with a view to transcending global zero-sum games.

If we, the United Nations — united not, as 50 years ago, against someone, but driven by the desire for peaceful cooperation — show sufficient determination to give effect to our own proposals at this Meeting and at major conferences such as those held under United Nations auspices in recent years, the world stands a chance of ensuring a better and safer life in the twenty-first century. It stands a chance of ensuring lasting peace and sustained development for all and ensuring respect for the rights of the citizens of this globe. It stands a chance of realizing the lofty purposes of the Charter, which remains the Organization's signpost in the service of the United Nations.

The President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Jozef Oleksy, Prime Minister of the Republic of Poland, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Her Excellency Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway

The President: The Assembly will next hear a statement by Her Excellency Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway.

Her Excellency Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted to the rostrum.

Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland: To millions of people, the United Nations has meant food where there was none, vaccination where epidemics raged, a school

to attend, a new well in the village, and Blue Helmets who kept belligerents apart, shielding civil life.

To scores of new nations, access to this rostrum meant sovereignty and self-determination. From this rostrum, for 50 years, all countries have been able to call for world attention.

To the hundreds of thousands of good and dedicated people who have served the United Nations, let us pay our tribute. To the peace-keepers and field-workers who did not return, among them our second Secretary-General, let us pay our respect.

But let us not only commemorate the past. Let us also chart a new beginning. Though the United Nations today faces great difficulties, we, the Member States, are responsible.

The ploughshare that worked for five decades is worn. Let us forge a new one.

Today I will address five pressing issues.

First, there is the issue of finance. Some dozen parliaments hold this Organization hostage by withholding their membership fees. How unworthy. We must all pay our fees in full and on time. We require some countries to pay more than their fair share. Other countries voluntarily pay more than their fair share. Many countries pay too little or hardly anything at all.

Secondly, we must reform. Change and renewal is a must for every effective organization. Reform of the Security Council is needed, where the issue of a regionally balanced enlargement now must be addressed — the most obvious candidates being, of course, Japan and Germany — while the Council's decision-making efficiency must be retained and its implementation ability greatly enhanced.

Responsibility for sustainable development, poverty, population, education and the environment is spread out. Mandates overlap. Let us draw up a schedule for implementing what we have decided in Rio, Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing. We meant what we said. Now, let us do it.

Thirdly, we must coordinate our humanitarian assistance activities better, allowing us to react more quickly and more effectively. Funds, people and resources often prove to be available only when human suffering has worsened enough to dominate the evening news, while other tragedies of famine, environmental degradation and underdevelopment remain unnoticed.

Fourthly, we must improve our peace-keeping and conflict-prevention capacity to save more lives and to save expenses. Delayed action is costly in terms of human suffering and resources, and more countries must contribute. We need better stand-by arrangements; we need sharing of experience and training.

Fifthly, we must build the civilized world on law and contract, an international society where the strong are just and the weak secure, as President Kennedy of the United States phrased it right here in this Hall. We need affirmative action in the interest of our poorest members. We need an international public or civic sector and a conscientious human rights watch here in the United Nations. We must bring justice where the limits are overstepped and support the new international courts, including an international criminal court, to make a civilized world.

A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when the Middle East peace process is successfully completed. A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when anti-personnel mines are prohibited, so that the children of war-torn areas can walk safely in the fields. A new step towards this civilized world will be taken when the new test-ban takes effect.

There can be no civilized world unless we unite to strengthen multilateralism. In this endeavour, the United Nations is our repository of hope.

The President: I thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway for her statement.

Her Excellency Ms. Gro Harlem Brundtland, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Felipe González, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain

The President: The Assembly will next hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Felipe González, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain.

His Excellency Mr. Felipe González, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. González (*interpretation from Spanish*): As President of the Government of Spain and on behalf of the European Union, I have particular satisfaction in addressing the General Assembly in this solemn Special Commemorative Meeting on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, presided over by such an eminent personality as Professor Freitas do Amaral and with the presence of the Secretary-General, whose work deserves our recognition.

The birth of our Organization, so closely linked to the end of a tragic war, enshrined certain principles that formed the basis of the common effort to fulfil mankind's aspirations: peace, freedom, human dignity and economic and social progress.

The great suffering caused in Europe by the wars that during this century pitted our peoples against each other made us look upon the purposes and principles of the Charter of San Francisco for the inspiration required to bring together our wills.

The European Union is a common project for living together in peace, for shared political, economic and social values, which has enabled Europe to re-emerge from its ashes and to establish itself as a focal point of stability and progress in the international arena.

This project is driven by our solidarity in the task of building an international community which is freer, more just and safer.

The European Union salutes the achievements of the Organization and reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter. The universality of the United Nations reinforces its role as a centre for harmonizing the efforts to advance on this path. One cannot conceive of today's world without considering the contribution of the United Nations to the process of decolonization, to environment and development issues, and to the consecration of innovative concepts, such as the common heritage of mankind. The fundamental contribution of our Organization to the maintenance of international peace and security, to disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to the codification of international law and to the protection and promotion of human rights attests to the universality of the United Nations and constitutes its legitimizing force.

These achievements do not conceal the setbacks suffered by the United Nations, nor its structural and management problems. Its shortcomings, which we all share with the Organization, must be surmounted through honest and profound reflection, if it is to successfully confront the challenges facing us at the close of this century.

The European Union has been able to express in concrete terms its commitment to the United Nations. The 15 States members of the Union represent, collectively and by far, the main contributor to the budgets of this Organization, as well as the main contributor of personnel to peace-keeping operations. The European Union is also the principal donor of funds for humanitarian assistance and for development cooperation.

Furthermore, the States members of the European Union have submitted initiatives with a view to promoting the ideals of the Organization in areas such as disarmament, human rights and humanitarian assistance.

The political commitment of the Member States to the Organization and the contribution of adequate resources represent for the European Union two inseparable aspects of the support that the United Nations needs. Only the existence of a viable financial basis will allow for the success of the efforts towards the revitalization of the United Nations system, to which the European Union attaches great importance. Hence, the Union hopes that all States, large and small, will contribute to this task through the full, punctual and unconditional fulfilment of their financial obligations.

We need an effective Organization — one that responds to the conflicts with an enhanced capacity for preventive diplomacy and humanitarian assistance, for peace-keeping and peacemaking and for rehabilitation and reconstruction once conflicts have been overcome.

There is a need for the United Nations system to intensify its work with a view to eradicating hunger and poverty, unemployment and social marginalization; to protecting human rights; and to promoting education, health, and the equality of men and women. There is also a need for the United Nations to coordinate the efforts towards sustainable development that reaches everyone and allows for the preservation of our environment and the welfare of future generations. In this endeavour, we need, finally, to commit and arouse the enthusiasm of all sectors of our respective societies, especially the young, so that their concerns may inspire our efforts.

Only thus shall we be able to secure the foundations of peace for the better and more just world that we want. This is the demanding task that continues to give a profound meaning to our Organization. In the pursuit of this collective task the United Nations can rely on the active commitment of the European Union.

The President: I thank the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Felipe González, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, Prime Minister of Japan

The President: The Assembly will next hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, Prime Minister of Japan.

His Excellency Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Murayama (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; interpretation provided by the delegation*): It gives me great pleasure to join this gathering on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations.

At the outset, I should like to convey two messages.

First, I wish to express the gratitude of the people of Japan to the international community. At the time the United Nations was founded Japan was striving to recover from the devastation of the war and to engage in national reconstruction. Firmly resolved that the scourge of war must never be repeated, Japan adopted its Peace Constitution. Since then, in accordance with its basic philosophy as a peace-loving nation — including non-resort to the use of force prohibited by its Constitution — Japan has made cooperation with the United Nations an important pillar of its foreign policy and has thus been contributing actively to the peace and prosperity of the international community. Japan has never forgotten the support it received from many members of the international community in building the economic prosperity it enjoys today.

Secondly, I should like to stress that the role of the United Nations is growing and diversifying. As we approach the next century, how humankind will deal with the population explosion is becoming a serious issue. As a result, securing a stable food supply and environmental protection are becoming greater challenges. It is also of increasing importance that we deal effectively with other global issues, such as those of refugees and AIDS. Moreover, we are witnessing with profound concern the grave conflicts arising from religious and ethnic rivalries that transcend national boundaries. In many instances poverty and social instability lie at the root of these difficult problems. The United Nations has an increasingly important role to play in addressing these issues more effectively and in building world peace and prosperity.

What is required of us if the United Nations is to play such a role is that we not limit our concern to the nation State level, but also that we focus our efforts on the well-being of each and every one of "Earth's citizens". The part to be played by women and non-governmental organizations continues to grow. Hence a new concept — human security — in addition to that of national security, has emerged as a major challenge for the United Nations. This concept, which embraces respect for the human rights of every citizen on Earth and the protection of each of us from poverty, disease, ignorance, oppression and violence, is consonant with my own political principles. Since I became Prime Minister, the creation of a human-centred society, in which all citizens are treated equally and are able to realize their full potential, has been pivotal to my administration's policy. At the World Summit for Social Development last March I emphasized people-centred social development as an area of priority.

As a leading donor country, Japan has been supporting the concept of sustainable development, has been providing assistance for the promotion of democracy and economic reform and has been striving to extend a broad range of economic cooperation, including cooperation to meet global challenges. Japan is also advocating a new development strategy that focuses on combining various policy measures in a comprehensive manner. It intends to play an even more expanded role in these areas. Japan also stands ready to cooperate more actively for peace in such areas as humanitarian assistance; preventive diplomacy and peace-keeping operations; and arms control and disarmament, in respect of nuclear weapons as well as conventional weapons such as anti-personnel land-mines and small arms.

The fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations is also the fiftieth year since the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It is time for us to accelerate our efforts

towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. I thus find it all the more deplorable that nuclear testing continues at this juncture. I strongly call for the immediate cessation of nuclear testing. To this end, it is extremely important that a resolution calling for cessation be adopted during this session of the General Assembly, with the support of as many Member States as possible. I also believe that it is a most urgent task, as a major step towards nuclear disarmament, to complete the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty by next spring and to sign it by next autumn.

In our statement during the general debate we outlined Japan's position on the reforms that are necessary if the United Nations is to be able to fulfil its mission.

First, Japan, which has been playing a major role as the second largest contributor, earnestly calls upon all Member States to face up to the financial crisis of the United Nations, to honour their financial obligations and to urgently and seriously address the question of United Nations financial reform.

Secondly, it is increasingly necessary to reform the United Nations system in the economic and social fields. Improving the efficiency and reviewing the mandates of the Economic and Social Council and other related organs are pressing tasks. From this perspective, Japan will continue actively to participate in the discussions on an Agenda for Development so that it can make its distinctive contribution.

Thirdly, with regard to the reform of the Security Council, its functions must be strengthened by enhancing its effectiveness and its legitimacy. This will necessitate an expansion of the Council that includes an increase in its permanent membership and improvement in its working methods, for example through enhanced transparency. I should like to urge that Member States work expeditiously to reach an agreement on a broad framework of reform that includes these elements by the time this General Assembly session concludes next September.

We have only five years left to the twenty-first century. Humankind has reached the stage at which we should all join hands and advance together so that the coming century will be one of hope in which we can look forward to the creation and development of a new global civilization. On this occasion, I should like to reaffirm the determination that the people of Japan made 50 years ago to live in peace, trusting in the justice and faith of the peace-loving peoples of the world.

I should like to conclude my statement today with the assurance that, as the exploration of a new vision for the United Nations continues, Japan will attach ever-greater importance to and enhance its support for the Organization. In order to bring about world peace and eradicate poverty and inequality, Japan will do its utmost to contribute to the international community on the basis of the universal ideals of freedom and democracy.

The President: I thank the Prime Minister of Japan for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Tomiichi Murayama, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, Secretary of State of Switzerland

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 48/215 B, I now call on His Excellency Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, Secretary of State of Switzerland.

His Excellency Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, Secretary of State of Switzerland, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Kellenberger *(interpretation from French):* To the United Nations, celebrating its fiftieth anniversary today, I have the honour of addressing the congratulations of the Swiss Government. Notwithstanding its observer status, Switzerland feels very directly involved in this event. Fifty years ago, the founding Members of the United Nations decided to be the joint guarantors of international peace and security and to promote human rights and social and economic development in the world. In the United Nations, we have today a sound tool for global policy-making that enables us, day by day and year by year, to build our future.

The expectations in this respect are as great as the means and the instruments are modest. In spite of all this, the United Nations stands at the heart of the international order and will in the years ahead play a decisive role in the establishment of a global system of human security.

Since the end of the cold war, the United Nations has been called upon as never before to play its role of guarding and promoting international peace and security. This resurgence of activity has impelled the Organization to seek new ways of optimizing the implementation of the

concept of collective security and of further developing the underlying philosophy of peace-keeping operations.

Together with protection for the weakest in the event of a disaster or conflict, respect for human rights has become one of the basic principles of the United Nations. Indeed, peace and security can be guaranteed within the community of States only if citizens enjoy their fundamental rights and freedoms. This is possible only if the law stands above political power. Thus, by means of numerous treaties, covenants and conferences, the United Nations has moved the international community to make major strides in identifying shared priorities and principles.

The United Nations is deeply involved in managing the socio-economic upheavals that characterize the end of the twentieth century. The challenges affecting all mankind have been or will be the focus of major United Nations conferences that will have to help us identify solutions in a certain number of areas, all relating to global human security.

The objectives of the United Nations converge with the priorities of Switzerland's foreign policy. An active commitment to the promotion of international law in general and to the peaceful settlement of disputes in particular is a constant of that policy. The strengthening, implementation and verification of norms relating to human rights, as well as the promotion of democracy and the concept of a State based upon the rule of law, are all priority areas of Switzerland's international commitment.

In the same vein, Switzerland has been supporting United Nations peace-keeping operations to the extent of its capabilities. Just like the United Nations, Switzerland realizes that strengthened international cooperation is the only way to meet the technological, economic, social and environmental challenges facing mankind as the third millennium draws near. Switzerland will in future seek to enhance its cooperation with the United Nations and make every effort to provide the Organization with the intellectual, operational and financial support one is entitled to expect from our country.

This convergence of views prompts the Swiss Government's desire to pursue membership in the United Nations as an objective of its foreign policy. Our Government is thus striving to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Swiss people to enable them to become aware of the changing face of international cooperation and of United Nations activities.

In Geneva, Switzerland is the host country to the United Nations and numerous other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Switzerland deems the presence on its soil of international organizations to be highly important and is determined to spare no effort to ensure that Geneva remains a special venue for international organizations and conferences. To this end, it will endeavour to contribute to enhancing the working conditions of the bodies of the United Nations and of the other international organizations established in Geneva.

On the occasion of these fiftieth anniversary festivities, Switzerland wishes not only to extend to the United Nations its warmest congratulations, but also to thank the Organization for having created the conditions for constructive international cooperation. The future that the Swiss Government hopes to share with the United Nations cannot but be built on intensive and fruitful cooperation.

The President: I thank the Secretary State of Switzerland for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Jakob Kellenberger, Secretary of State of Switzerland, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization

The President: In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/12 A, I now call on His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was escorted to the rostrum.

Mr. Arafat *(interpretation from Arabic):* It gives me great pleasure, Sir, on behalf of the Palestinian people and its leadership in the Palestine Liberation Organization and the Palestinian National Authority, to express to you and to your friendly country our congratulations as you preside over this historic meeting, which crowns 50 years of international action.

I also wish to salute the Kings, Presidents and Heads of delegations of the countries participating in this meeting. I also salute Mr. Boutros-Ghali for his

principled positions and tireless efforts. I salute the United Nations.

Our meeting today affords us an important opportunity to take stock of the United Nations experience and to reaffirm our commitment to its Charter for a world of peace and security and a better future for mankind.

The history of the United Nations is intertwined with that of the question of Palestine. It was the United Nations that adopted the resolution on the partition of Palestine into two States: one Jewish and one Arab. Since then, the United Nations has not ceased to deal with the question of Palestine in all its ramifications and developments.

The history of the United Nations and its resolutions constitute an expression of its permanent legal, political and moral responsibility, which makes the United Nations a witness to the immense suffering of our people and their sacrifices, their displacement and scattering to all parts of the world, as well as the wars and massacres which have been inflicted upon them. Nevertheless, they persisted in their struggle and their *intifadah* for survival and for the affirmation of their national identity.

Hence the importance of the United Nations continuing role. It should continue to sponsor our Palestinian cause, alongside the Israeli-Palestinian agreements, until the implementation of our inalienable national rights, including the right of our people to return, self-determination and national independence.

The initiative of President Bush for the peace process and the Madrid Conference, and later the meetings in Washington, was made on the basis of United Nations resolutions, and the Palestinian-Israeli agreements in Oslo, Cairo, Taba, Washington and others, were based on United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as on the principle of land-for-peace.

This means that the United Nations has an abiding responsibility towards the cause of our people, particularly because such fundamental issues as the questions of Al-Quds, of refugees, of the settlements and of the final borders, have been left to the final stage.

Our people have continued to affirm their support for the peace process. When we embarked upon the peace process, which was approved by our National Council, Central Council and all other organizational units, the peace option became an irreversible Palestinian decision. It springs from our people's desire to turn over the leaf of killing and destruction once and for all, so that the Palestinian people and the Israeli people may live side by side, in two independent States on the basis of mutual respect.

This historic Palestinian-Israeli reconciliation must be carried through as envisaged. It must be completed on all the other Arab-Israeli tracks, particularly the Lebanese and Syrian tracks, so that peace may be just and comprehensive and include also the Iraqi and the Libyan peoples.

In spite of all the difficulties we are determined to press forward to complete the transitional stage and enter into negotiations on the final status. I should like to seize this opportunity to express our appreciation to the sponsors of the peace process, the United States and the Russian Federation, especially for the support of President Clinton and his good efforts and that of his assistants, and for the efforts of President Yeltsin. I should also like to express appreciation for the efforts made by President Mubarak of Egypt, in particular to give the process a push forward, and the efforts of Their Majesties King Fahd, King Hassan II and King Hussein, as well as those of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President Zeroual and President Ali Abdullah Saleh, the permanent members of the Security Council, the member States of the European Union and Japan and the efforts of Mr. Boutros-Ghali, Norway and the Arab, Islamic, African and Non-Aligned States.

We emphasize our need for their support in order for our people to succeed in its endeavour, to rebuild its infrastructure which has been destroyed by the occupation, to end its dispersal and to build its political system on the foundations of democratic pluralism and freedom.

The winds of change are blowing in our world. A new world order is emerging. It is our responsibility in the United Nations and in the international community to make it a good order for the stability, security and peace of the world, with the wider participation of the States and peoples of the world. We therefore support the trend towards the expansion of the membership of the Security Council, which will give it new vigour and will ensure justice and equality for all.

I came to this Assembly 21 years ago as a fighter for freedom, liberation and independence, carrying with me the torments of my struggling people. Today,

however, I come to you with a heart filled with love and peace, now that the olive branch has been raised over the peace of the brave.

Our people yearns for peace. The prophecy of good tidings has been heralded. Help us bring it to fulfilment, help us bring it to fulfilment.

The President: I thank the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization for his statement.

His Excellency Mr. Yasser Arafat, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, was escorted from the rostrum.

The President: Before adjourning the meeting, I should like to inform Your Excellencies that, owing to the lateness of the hour, it will not be possible to hear all the speakers scheduled for the meeting this morning. The remaining speakers will therefore be moved to this afternoon's meeting at 3 p.m. as first speakers in their respective categories.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.